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THINGS STRANGE AND TRUE.

At Americus, Canada, there is a peculiar species of rat. It is of several colors and hundreds of them can be seen about the streets.

When Columbus discovered America he found that the Indians possessed dogs. They were direct descendants of the wild coyotes of the plains.

A SNAKE with two fully developed heads, one at each end of the body, was recently captured in Placer county, Cal., and brought alive to the office of the San Francisco Chronicle. The reptile is a foot long.

There are some curious things in Yellowstone park, among which is a hole which has no bottom that has yet been reached. A line has been dropped down nearly three thousand feet and yet it did not touch bottom.

BIG MONEY FIGURES.

COLORADO's "pay dirt" last year in gold, silver, copper and lead amounted to \$33,548,934. Her smelter's product amounted to \$44,919,193.

It is said that three-quarters of the entire manufacturing capital of the United States, or \$6,000,000,000 is directly or indirectly based upon patents.

The total foreign commerce of the port of New York for the year 1891, according to the annual report of the New York chamber of commerce, amounted to \$1,040,667,425.

The exports of gold from New York last year were \$76,221,000, and the imports \$31,585,000, making the excess of exports \$44,636,000. The production of gold in the United States was \$30,000,000, of which it is estimated about one-third has been used in the arts.

EARLY FASHIONS.

Parments to Replace Heavy Winter Wraps.

A Unique Cloak Designed by Felix—Dresses That Are Half of Fur—Hats Become Larger and Prettier at Approaching Spring.

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As it nears the time for the snows and winds of winter to give place to the balminess of spring, the thought of womankind turneth toward the costume which she will wear when she leaves off her fur ulster and puts on something lighter.

It isn't time to change yet. But it is time to begin to think of changing and to decide upon that most trying of all styles, the one that is to be worn between seasons.

The transition from winter to spring is such an uncertain thing. One day the air is keen and the winds so sharp that all thoughts of spring seem far removed from the mind of mother nature. The next day the sun shines balmy, and it seems as if spring might be close at hand.

It is never safe to change as long as the vicissitudes and uncertainties continue. It is far more the part of prudence to wait until the weather has become settled, and the serenity of the atmosphere makes it possible to go forth without the winter jacket and does not carry with it the threatening possibility of a heavy cold.

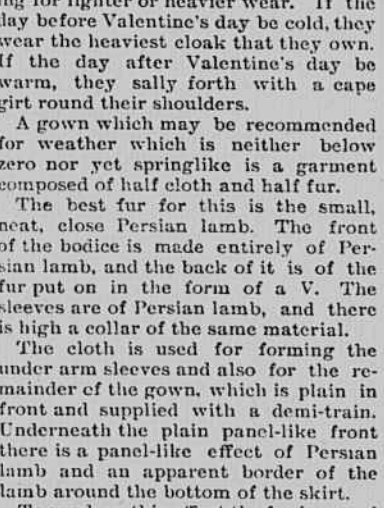
In the uncertain climate around New York many women exercise constant discretion regarding their clothes, using their own judgment about changing for lighter or heavier wear. If the day before Valentine's day be cold, they wear the heaviest cloak that they own. If the day after Valentine's day be warm, they sally forth with a cape girl round their shoulders.

A gown which may be recommended for weather which is neither below zero nor yet springlike is a garment composed of half cloth and half fur. The best fur for this is the small, neat, close Persian lamb. The front of the bodice is made entirely of Persian lamb, and the back of it is of the fur put on in the form of a V. The sleeves are of Persian lamb, and there is high a collar of the same material.

The cloth is used for forming the under arm sleeves and also for the remainder of the gown, which is plain in front and supplied with a demi-train. Underneath the plain panel-like front there is a panel-like effect of Persian lamb and an apparent border of the lamb around the bottom of the skirt.

To produce this effect the fur is sewed upon a silk foundation skirt and the dress skirt is draped over it. Felix is making some odd cloaks for spring wear. They are extremely unique and may be said to be unlike anything that the great modist has ever turned out of his shop. Worth is following him closely in the matter of odd and voluminous spring wraps. And the object of both dressmakers seems to be to make the wraps as full and large as possible, without seeming bulky.

A great deal of material is used, an almost incredible amount. It is a statement borne out by fact that into one of



AN EARLY GLIMPSE.

and feathers of the same color were bunched at the back.

The gown that went with this hat was of green Bedford cord, made in the long coat fashion.

The skirt was perfectly plain and demi-trained and around the bottom of it, as well as around the toque, there was a thick band of green feather trimming. Pink gloves stitched with green and a large feather fan with a still larger green bow tied in the ring, were among the finishing touches suggested by the tasteful little French dressmaker.

Rumor has it that it is coming in style to part the hair again, and to band it upon the forehead in waves. The fashion is such a trying one that it surely will not be generally followed.

A bang is too becoming to be brushed aside in the form of a part.

One afternoon last week, a certain beautiful girl who lives up in this quiet, secluded part of Madison avenue took a walk down that thoroughfare, with her hair parted and drawn down over her ears, with scarcely a ripple to show where the hair had once been curled.

The girl's cheeks were so red, her complexion was so fair, her eyes were so bright, and her countenance so sweet that all who saw her looked and marveled to see such simplicity upon so pretty a girl.

But, mark you! And listen to the moral of this tale! The next day, there appeared at the same hour, upon the same avenue, a score of girls, particular friends of the sweet-faced one, who had brushed aside their bangs, and come out to walk with parted tresses over their foreheads, feeling sure that they were as beautiful as she whom they were imitating.

But alas! The first girl was pretty! The score that followed her example were homely! And to see them making guys of themselves in this fashion was a warning to others not to go and do likewise.

The sweet-faced girl is still wearing her hair parted. But her Grecian-faced sister has discovered that when she parts her hair she makes her face look like a hatchet, and so she has given up the idea of discarding bangs. The other girls who looked respectively like walnut dolls, old maids and dowdies, have gone back to their curls and curls, and Madison avenue blooms again along the squares that were laid waste of beauty by the sudden change of hair dressing



HALF OF FUR.

these beautiful full-hanging spring cloaks there was put twenty-five yards of ladies' cloth, single-width.

The cloak in question was as long as a demi-trained dress, and the back was laid in accordion plaits from the shoulders to the end of the rounded train. The front is laid in accordion plaits, covering a panel about eight inches wide, which extends from the neck to the bottom of the cloak. Over the shoulders there are full cape-like epaulets, hanging in large folds, and there is an embroidered yoke. Embroidery extends around the bottom of the cloak and also up to the sleeves. With this unique cloak there goes a hat quite as odd. It is of jet, fastened upon a wire framework, and it has a very broad

round-spreading brim. The brim is faced with a shirring of black lace, and directly in front there are two large bluish roses. The cloak is of gray and the strings of the hat are of gray to correspond. There are also gray plumes on the back of the hat.

For those who have not yet guessed the name of the city in which the woman lives who is to wear this unique cloak, the information may be given that it is in Philadelphia, the city of pearl gray and Quaker drab. The cloak is to be worn by a certain sweet and pretty matron, who is fair and fully forty, and who goes over to the other side every year to order her wardrobe. She visits frequently at the Philadelphia home of the postmaster-general and her ways are as demure and her smile as sweet as one would fancy ought to accompany the gray tones and the bluish roses of the costume described.

Have you ever noticed how odd it is that women who affect the demure and the staid in dress are nevertheless guilty of putting little finishing touches to their toilet that you would hardly expect or look for? For example, one sees the woman who is wearing a long gray gown or wrap of subdued make, and a hat far removed from giddiness, carrying, nevertheless, in her hand, a lorgnette with a very costly and beautiful handle. One also notices that she wears musquitario gloves with wrinkled tops and that, though her bonnet strings are tied in the primmest possible way, her hat is fastened on with a terribly fashionable dagger.

Perhaps her gloves have fancy stitching upon the back of them, and she may even be guilty of pinning back the ribbon bows of her bonnet strings with heart-shaped stick pins. They are really hard to understand—these women!

With approaching spring the hat becomes larger. The winds of February and early March carry with them a roughness to fair complexions, and many people freckle at the first thought or glimpse of spring sunshine. Hats, therefore, increase in size, and they go on increasing until summer comes and declares that it is time to wear little toques.

A very pretty large hat may be made by covering one of the flat-brimmed circular-crowned hats, which are now the latest style in Paris, with Irish lace.

If the lace is a floral design, it is daintily pretty if wrought out in gold or pale gray silk, so that the flowers set out upon the black background of the hat. If the hat is merely a framework, it should be covered first with black net, and then the lace should be put on over it.

A very lovely gown, that was recently shown me as a sample of what a French dressmaker can do in achieving a beautiful calling costume, had a hat of this sort. Around the low, fair crown there was twisted a band of velvet of greenish yellow hue.

There was a puffing of the velvet around the edge of the hat brim.



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